

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 20064 01 OF 03 021749Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----034784 021804Z /46

P R 021736Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3669
INFO AMCONSUL MUNICH
USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 20064

EXDIS

USBER FOR AMBASSADOR STOESSEL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, ETEL, US, GW
SUBJECT: RFE/RL: VISIT OF BIB CHAIRMAN GRONOUSKI

SUMMARY: FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS CONFIRMED TO VISITING
BIB CHAIRMAN GRONOUSKI THEIR SUPPORT FOR APPROVAL OF
HOLZKIRCHEN MODERNIZATION AND RFE/RL AMALGAMATION
APPLICATIONS. THE FOREIGN OFFICE WOULD PRESENT THIS
POSITION IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CHANCELLERY. WHILE A
VETO BY CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT COULD NOT BE EXCLUDED, THESE
OFFICIALS WERE CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS
FOR APPROVAL. THE CHANCELLERY WOULD SOON BE INSTRUCTING
THE FOREIGN OFFICE TO BEGIN CONSULTATIONS WITH THE
EMBASSY ON THESE AND OTHER ISSUES INVOLVING THE RADIOS.
FRG OFFICIALS EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN OVER COSMETICS OF
PROSPECTIVE MOVE OF RFE/RL PRESIDENCY FROM WASHINGTON
TO MUNICH AND GRONOUSKI AGREED TO LOOK AT MATTER FROM
THAT PERSPECTIVE. WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSIONS ALSO DEALT
WITH ACCREDITATION TO OLYMPIC GAMES, JAMMING, PROGRAM
CONTENT AND POSSIBLE CHANGE IN NOMENCLATURE OF RADIOS.
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PAGE 02 BONN 20064 01 OF 03 021749Z

END SUMMARY.

1. BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING (BIB) CHAIRMAN
GRONOUSKI AND BIB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERTS VISITED
BONN NOVEMBER 28 AND 29 TO DISCUSS RFE/RL AFFAIRS WITH
FRG OFFICIALS. GRONOUSKI BRIEFED CHANCELLERY
(POLITICAL DIRECTOR RUHFUS) AND FOREIGN OFFICE (STATE

MINISTER VON DOHNANYI; DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY MEYER-LANDRUT; AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF OFFICE CHARGED WITH RADIO AFFAIRS BAUCH) OFFICIALS ON HIS PERCEPTION OF RADIO'S FUNCTIONS AND MATTERS OF CURRENT INTEREST. PRINCIPAL COMMENTS OF GRONOUSKI AND GERMAN OFFICIALS ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW:

2. HOLZKIRCHEN MODERNIZATION: GRONOUSKI OUTLINED WORK OF EISENHOWER COMMISSION, NOTING RECOMMENDATION TO UPGRADE OUTMODED TRANSMITTER EQUIPMENT AT HOLZKIRCHEN AND OTHER STATIONS. THIS RECOMMENDATION PREDATED PRESENT ADMINISTRATION AND WAS A TECHNICAL IMPERATIVE IF RADIOS WERE TO TRANSMIT EFFECTIVELY. PRESIDENT CARTER HAD AGREED WITH THIS RECOMMENDATION AND RESULT HAD BEEN HIS MARCH 22 REQUEST TO UPGRADE TRANSMITTERS.

FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS (MEYER-LANDRUT AND BAUCH) CONFIRMED THAT MINISTRY SUPPORTED REQUEST TO MODERNIZE HOLZKIRCHEN. THE FOREIGN OFFICE WOULD DISCUSS WITH THE CHANCELLERY THE POLITICAL QUESTIONS INVOLVED AND WOULD URGE APPROVAL. WHILE THE CHANCELLOR HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT AN INCREASING PRESENCE OF THE RADIOS IN GERMANY, THEY WERE CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC THAT APPROVAL WOULD BE FORTHCOMING. THEY CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT APPROVAL COULD TAKE SOME TIME AND THEY CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 BONN 20064 01 OF 03 021749Z

COUNSELED PATIENCE. AT ONE POINT, MEYER-LANDRUT SAID, "WE WILL GET IT, JUST BE PATIENT."

RUHFUS SAID THE FOREIGN OFFICE WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO CONSULT WITH THE EMBASSY ON HOLZKIRCHEN AND OTHER OUTSTANDING ISSUES INVOLVING THE RADIOS. THE CHANCELLOR HAD A STRONG PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE RADIOS AND REFERENCE WAS MADE TO HIS DISCUSSIONS IN 1974 WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER AND IN 1977 WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. RUHFUS REALIZED THAT A PROMPT RESPONSE WAS REQUIRED AND HE HOPED A SOLUTION COULD BE FOUND "MORE IN LINE WITH OUR SITUATION HERE AND OUR SOVEREIGNTY." HE DID NOT INDICATE WHAT THE CHANCELLERY DECISION MIGHT BE THOUGH HE GENERALLY MAINTAINED A POSITIVE APPROACH TOWARD THE RADIOS, NOTING THAT THEIR VALUE AS A SOURCE OF INFO IN EASTERN EUROPE HAD AGAIN BEEN BROUGHT HOME TO HIM DURING HIS VISIT TO POLAND WITH THE CHANCELLOR.

BEGIN COMMENT: MEYER-LANDRUT LATER TOLD US THE

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PAGE 01 BONN 20064 02 OF 03 021800Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3670
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 BONN 20064

EXDIS

SUGGESTION OF FOREIGN OFFICE-EMBASSY CONSULTATIONS
HAD BEEN HIS IDEA AND RUHFUS HAD READILY AGREED. AS
NOTED ABOVE, MEYER-LANDRUT SUPPORTS APPROVAL OF THE
HOLZKIRCHEN APPLICATION. END COMMENT.

STATE MINISTER VON DOHNANYI WAS IN GENERAL MORE
RESERVED ON HOLZKIRCHEN. WHILE IT MIGHT BE DESIRABLE
FROM A TECHNICAL STANDPOINT, POLITICALLY IT REPRESENTED
AN INCREASE IN RADIO PRESENCE WHICH RAN COUNTER TO THE
CHANCELLOR'S DESIRES. THE MATTER MUST THEREFORE BE
HANDLED DELICATELY. THOUGH THERE WERE BASICALLY NO
DIFFERENCES IN OUR FOREIGN POLICY, INCLUDING OUR
APPROACH TO DETENTE, THERE WERE SHADINGS OF EMPHASIS
WHICH AFFECTED BROADCAST POLICY TOWARD THE EAST. THE
RADIOS WERE NOW OPERATING IN A NEW ERA OF GERMAN
SOVEREIGNTY AND THIS, TOO, HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO
ACCOUNT. THIS MADE THE FRG VERY CAUTIOUS AND IT
WOULD BE NECESSARY TO REVIEW THE MATTER CAREFULLY.

BEGIN COMMENT: VON DOHNANYI'S UNHELPLEFUL APPROACH
IS NOT INDICATIVE OF FOREIGN OFFICE POLICY. AS A
PARLIAMENTARY STATE MINISTER, VON DOHNANYI HAS NO
LINE RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN THE MINISTRY AND IS NOT IN
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PAGE 02 BONN 20064 02 OF 03 021800Z

THE DECISION-MAKING CHAIN ON THIS ISSUE. NONETHELESS, HE IS AN IMPORTANT FIGURE IN THE SPD AND HIS OPINION MAY BE MORE REFLECTIVE OF PARTY SENTIMENT. IF HIS VIEWS ARE WIDESPREAD WITHIN THE PARTY--AND WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT THEY ARE--IT WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE HOLZKIRCHEN DECISION. END COMMENT.

3. RFE/RL AMALGAMATION AND VORBEHALT (RESERVATION CLAUSE): BAUCH BELIEVED THE POSTAL MINISTRY WOULD ISSUE A NEW LICENSE FOR THE MERGED CORPORATION WITHIN A FEW WEEKS. THERE WERE NO PROBLEMS HERE. HE HOPED WORKING-LEVEL ACTION ON THE RESERVATION CLAUSE (VORBEHALT) COULD BE CONCLUDED THIS WEEK OR NEXT. (THE FINAL DRAFT WOULD BASICALLY RESEMBLE THE 1955 RFE AND RL LETTERS TO GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE). THERE WOULD THEN BE A MEETING WITH THE POSTAL MINISTRY. IF THE CHANCELLERY DID NOT EXPRESS AN INTEREST IN CLEARING THE WORDING--AND BAUCH DID NOT EXPECT THAT THEY WOULD--THE TEXT WOULD BE APPROVED AND COMMUNICATED TO THE . EMBASSY.

4. MOVEMENT OF PRESIDENCY TO MUNICH: GRONOUSKI EXPLAINED THAT THE PROSPECTIVE SHIFT OF THE PRESIDENCY FROM WASHINGTON TO MUNICH BY UPGRADING THE POSITION OF EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT WOULD PERMIT TIGHTER POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL OVER RADIO OUTPUT. THIS WOULD HELP INSURE ITS CONFORMITY WITH ESTABLISHED POLICY GUIDELINES. WE REALIZED, HOWEVER, THAT POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES IN THE FRG MIGHT BE BETTER ACCOMMODATED BY A DE FACTO SHIFT IN WHICH THE MUNICH POSITION WOULD ASSUME BROADER FUNCTIONS WHILE RETAINING THE SAME TITLE. CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 BONN 20064 02 OF 03 021800Z

THE REACTION OF FRG OFFICIALS VARIED. RUHFUS AGREED ON THE NEED FOR TIGHTER CONTROL OF RADIO BROADCASTING. HE BELIEVED THE SHIFT COULD BE AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS IF IT WERE A DE FACTO ARRANGEMENT THAT DID NOT GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF AN INCREASE IN RADIO PRESENCE. THIS COULD BE THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER CONSULTATION WITH THE EMBASSY.

VON DOHNANYI REACTED SOMEWHAT NEGATIVELY TO THE PROPOSED SHIFT. HE AGREED IT HAD ADVANTAGES FROM A MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, FELT IT RAN COUNTER TO SCHMIDT'S DESIRE TO REDUCE THE RADIO'S PRESENCE IN THE FRG. THE MATTER WOULD HAVE TO BE

CLOSELY EXAMINED AND HIS PRELIMINARY REACTION WAS NOT FAVORABLE. AT VON DOHNANYI'S REQUEST, GRONOUSKI AGREED TO POSTPONE BIB ACTION ON THE MATTER UNTIL THE FRG HAD HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW IT.

COMMENT: AS NOTED ABOVE, VON DOHNANYI DOES NOT HAVE LINE RESPONSIBILITY FOR RADIO AFFAIRS. END COMMENT.

5. RFE/RL ACCREDITATION TO OLYMPIC GAMES: MEYER-LANDRUT ASKED ABOUT THE STATUS OF RADIO ACCREDITATION TO THE MOSCOW GAMES. HE NOTED THAT THIS WAS A MATTER OF PUBLIC DISCUSSION HERE AND SUGGESTED THAT A POOLING ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN VOA AND RFE/RL MIGHT BE SUCCESSFUL IN MEETING SOVIET OBJECTIONS. GRONOUSKI REPLIED THAT THIS WAS ONE OF MANY WAYS IN WHICH THE ISSUE MIGHT BE

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 BONN 20064 03 OF 03 021757Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 BONN 20064

EXDIS

HANDLED. IT WAS, IN ANY CASE, IMPORTANT THAT THE RADIOS HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT IN MOSCOW. THE OLYMPICS WERE AN INTERNATIONAL, NON-POLITICAL EVENT AND RFE/RL AS A SERIOUS, PROFESSIONAL BROADCASTING ORGANIZATION MUST BE PERMITTED TO TAKE PART IN THEIR COVERAGE. GRONOUSKI NOTED THAT DEUTSCHE WELLE MIGHT ALSO HAVE PROBLEMS AND THAT A JOINT POSITION PRIOR TO THE IOC MEETING IN ATHENS MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO BOTH STATIONS. MEYER-LANDRUT INDICATED THIS MIGHT BE WORTH PURSUING THOUGH HE MADE NO COMMITMENT.

6. NAME CHANGE: MEYER-LANDRUT, DURING AN OFFICE

MEETING WITH GRONOUSKI AND AGAIN MORE FORCEFULLY AT A SOCIAL OCCASION, SUGGESTED THAT A CHANGE IN THE NAME OF THE RADIOS MIGHT BE BENEFICIAL. MORE NEUTRAL NOMENCLATURE WOULD SIT WELL WITH WESTERN CRITICS AND WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL TO THE POLES WHO APPARENTLY JAMMED BROADCASTS ONLY UNDER SOVIET PRESSURE. IT MIGHT ALSO BE USEFUL TO NON-JAMMING COUNTRIES SUCH AS HUNGARY AND ROMANIA IN DEALING WITH MOSCOW ON THIS ISSUE. GRONOUSKI RESPONDED THAT SOME THOUGHT HAD BEEN GIVEN TO A NAME CHANGE AND THE MATTER MIGHT WELL BE FURTHER EXPLORED. WE WOULD, HOWEVER, WANT SOME

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BONN 20064 03 OF 03 021757Z

INFORMAL INDICATION FROM THE EAST THAT A CHANGE WOULD PRODUCE A FAVORABLE REACTION.

7. JAMMING: IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM ROBERTS, MEYER-LANDRUT SAID HE DID NOT ANTICIPATE CONCRETE RESULTS ON JAMMING TO EMERGE FROM THE CSCE FOLLOW-ON. IT WAS, HOWEVER, IMPORTANT TO BUILD UP PRESSURE FROM WITHIN AGAINST EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WHICH ENGAGED IN JAMMING. ROBERTS AGREED AND SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF COORDINATED ACTION IN BELGRADE TO EXERT MORE PRESSURE. MEYER-LANDRUT WAS NON-COMMITAL.

8. PROGRAM CONTENT: THROUGHOUT DISCUSSIONS GRONOUSKI STRESSED INTEREST IN BEING INFORMED BY FRG OF ANY BROADCASTS OF POLITICAL CONCERN TO THEM. IN THIS CONNECTION, MEYER-LANDRUT OBSERVED THAT THE FRG'S OWN REVIEW OF RFE/RL'S BROADCASTS HAD UNEARTHED NOTHING OBJECTIONABLE. GRONOUSKI NOTED THAT BIB MONITORS PROGRAMS AND REVIEWS FREQUENT MONITORING REPORTS FROM EMBASSIES IN BROADCAST AREAS. TAPES OF ALL BROADCASTS WERE AVAILABLE AND COULD BE REVIEWED UPON REQUEST. FRG OFFICIALS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR OFFER AND FOR GRONOUSKI'S OFT-REPEATED CONCERN THAT BROADCAST CONTENT NOT BE PROBLEM FOR FRG.

9. SUGGESTION OF VOA-RFE/RL MERGER: RUHFUS, IN A REFERENCE TO SCHMIDT'S SENSITIVITIES REGARDING RADIOS, OFFERED "PERSONAL VIEW" THAT MERGER OF VOA AND RFE/RL COULD ALLEVIATE SOME OF FRG'S CONCERNS. VOA WAS OFFICIAL US ORGAN AND IN VIEW OF CLOSE US-FRG RELATIONSHIP ITS PRESENCE IN GERMANY, ALONG WITH THAT OF RFE/RL, COULD BE MORE EASILY JUSTIFIED VIS-A-VIS EASTERN EUROPEAN CRITICS.

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PAGE 03 BONN 20064 03 OF 03 021757Z

10. ON TWO OCCASIONS, FRG OFFICIALS RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE LONGWAVE FREQUENCY BEING HANDLED IN ONE PACKAGE. GRONOUSKI NOTED THAT THE LONGWAVE FREQUENCY FELL OUTSIDE BIB'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

11. THIS MESSAGE APPROVED BY CHAIRMAN GRONOUSKI. STOESEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS, RADIO BROADCASTING, RADIO STATIONS
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Sent Date: 02-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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SAS ID: 107356
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RFE/RL: VISIT OF BIB CHAIRMAN GRONOUSKI SUMMARY: FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS CONFIRMED TO VISITING BIB CHAIRMAN GRONOUSKI THEIR SUPPORT FOR APPROVAL
TAGS: OVIP, ETEL, US, GE, BIB
To: STATE
Type: TE
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